



The Marylander

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Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Report from the AAUW-Maryland ERA Task Force Chair

By: Judy Carbone, AAUW MD ERA Task Force Chair



The AAUW-Maryland Task Force continues to develop an organizational plan and objectives for moving forward. I'd like to thank Karina Shipp, Susan Crawford, and Tracy Lantz for their participation in our advocacy and action planning work. ERA advocacy has been a passion of mine for the past several years, and I appreciate Tracy tapping me to be the Chair of our new Task Force. There is much to report on what has been accomplished in the work overall.

Work continues across the country to propel the ERA forward. The ERA Coalition, in which AAUW-Maryland is a partner, continues to work with Congressional Leaders on:

- **HJR25 and SJR4: Affirm the Equal Rights Amendment is valid as part of the US Constitution notwithstanding any time limit.**
- **House Discharge Petition 6 (DP6): Brings HJR25 out of committee and to the House floor for a vote.**
- **HJR82 and SJR39: Affirm the Equal Rights Amendment is a valid amendment to the US Constitution and urges the Archivist to certify and publish the Equal Rights Amendment without delay.**

In Maryland, we are so fortunate to have federal elected officials who have vehemently supported the ERA: both Maryland Senators Cardin and Van Hollen and 7 of our 8 US Congressional Representatives, all except Rep. Andy Harris. **If you live in Maryland Congressional District 1, please write to Rep. Harris and ask him to support the Discharge Petition.** The more he hears from constituents, the more he will understand this is an issue that needs his attention. Let him know that equality for all should be a US Constitutional right and that the American people, who support the ERA 4 to 1, deserve to have the issue voted on in the House of Representatives. If you have friends and family who live in CD-1, please recruit them to help contact Rep. Harris and get others to do the same. An easy link to use for this contact is <https://eracoalition.org/take-action/hj-res-25/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=9bfdf473-41cb-4d10-a2fa-4322048675b2>, although you can simply call, email, or write to him (contact information found here) <https://harris.house.gov/contact>.

Information Sessions for Individual Branches.

Are you looking for a Branch Program? Maryland NOW is partnering with AAUW-Maryland branches and members to present information sessions on the ERA, its history, and its path forward. To date, presentations have been given for AAUW-Anne Arundel and AAUW-Gaithersburg, and sessions are planned for the first months in the new year for AAUW-Harford and AAUW-Garrett branches. **If your branch would like such a presentation, please let me know**, and I would be happy to get you

connected with Maryland NOW ERA Task Force Chair, Mary Ann Gorman, who has also recently joined us in AAUW. Recently, ERA educational materials developed by Maryland NOW were shared with the AAUW-Maryland branch presidents to be shared with branch members.

If you have any questions at all about the ERA, I will do my best to address them and/or provide resources for you. **Please contact me** at 301-616-5036 or judy@corgi-cottage.com.

Maryland State Legislation.

I have been working on a coalition group representing AAUW-Maryland and putting into action an **ERA Coalition strategy to have the ERA re-affirmed by the legislatures in states that have already ratified the ERA**. Such a re-affirming resolution urges the federal government to follow its constitutional mandate and recognize the ERA as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution and makes a clear statement that the States affirm the validity of the ERA and expect Congress and the Biden Administration to do so.

Legislatures in California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, and Minnesota have passed resolutions to affirm the ERA, and those in Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Tennessee have introduced ERA- affirming resolutions. We hope Maryland will join this list in 2024 and are actively engaged with supportive Maryland legislators who are dedicated to seeing that we do. Recently, Delegate Edith Patterson, who Chairs the Maryland General Assembly Women Legislators Caucus, became the sponsor of a joint house **ERA affirming resolution in the House of Delegates**. The affirming resolution was introduced at the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women's (MLAW) fall conference and will be pre-filed.

If you are a MLAW member, please support this resolution when you vote on the proposed bills for the agenda.

We are working with Senate President Ferguson to formulate a plan forward in the Senate. The "we" in this collaborative effort also includes Maryland NOW, Free State Justice, and the Democratic Women of Montgomery County. **AAUW-Maryland and several of our state branches are among the more than 30 organizations that have signed on to a support letter for the resolution that has been shared with state legislators.** Stay tuned for details on how you can help when the session starts in January!

Sign4ERA.

Another action item that you can take now is to sign the ERA petition that was developed by the students at Hunter College with former Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York. The petition is designed to inform federal officials, including those in congress and in presidential administration, that the ERA is supported broadly. For more information on the petition and to sign it, please go to <https://www.sign4era.org>. You can also help by posting the petition link on your own social media and sharing it however you can with family, friends, colleagues, and others across the county.

UN Hearing.

The ERA was discussed recently at the United Nations hearing on the status of the United States of America, one of its "member states" The ERA Coalition and other equality advocates testified. You can see the ERA's testimony at <https://www.eracoalition.org/2023/11/06/un-human-rights-committee-reports-the-need-for-the-equal-rights-amendment-in-the-united-states/>. The United Nations in its final report after the hearings concluded on the US's equality status: *"The State Party [the U.S.] should redouble its efforts to guarantee protection against sex and gender-based discrimination in its Constitution, including through initiatives such as the Equal Rights Amendment. The State party should also consider ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol."* **85% of the United Nations' member states have an ERA-type statement in their foundational documents; clearly the US is not one of them.**

Supporting VoteEquality.

I continue to represent AAUW-Maryland in our collaboration with VoteEquality, as does Tracy, work that was started earlier this year with the Maryland-AAUW Artist4ERA reception. **In the weeks before Virginia's recent election, I had the honor of driving the RVG (Ruthless Vote Getter) through southern Virginia talking about the importance of voting, voting for candidates who support equality, and ultimately getting the ERA into the US Constitution.** It was a fabulous experience and hopefully had an effect on the election successes of equality in the Virginia elections. We hope to do more with VoteEquality and the RVG in Maryland in the new year.

Thank you! And Happy New Year!

Judy



President's Message

By Tracy Lantz, President, AAUW Maryland

It's the Holiday Season and there is so much to share! **I'm making my donation to the NCWSSL WoD event and looking forward to AAUW Maryland honoring long time member Dian Belanger. Hope you'll make a donation soon as well.**

I'm happy to report that plans are in motion for an **AAUW regional conference** next fall (a multi-day event in September or October) to be held in Fredericksburg, VA! Carol Mueller, Dian Belanger and I are representing Maryland on the planning committee. We're working with states up and down the Atlantic coast including Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Last month we received a report on the regional event held in St. Louis, including had many successful ideas! I'd like to replicate their model as closely as possible, including offering assistance to branch members to attend the event. Your planning team will be in touch with the dates soon.

Thanks to the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Branch for hosting the Fall Conference. The two excellent speakers on climate change sparked informative discussion, and we'll post a short summary on the website (<https://aauw-md.aauw.net/>).

Be sure to mark your calendar for the **AAUW Maryland 2024 Spring Convention** hosted by the Kensington Rockville Branch on April 20th. The program will be especially relevant as we approach the 2024 election. I'm starting my search for a branch to host the summer meeting, typically held in July or August. Please consider hosting this event, especially if it has been a while since we've all shared in the beauty of **your** 'corner' of our state.

Our winter board meeting will be held via zoom on Saturday, January 20th from 1:00-3:30 pm. No need to leave the comfort of your home or remove your slippers, but we will have some important decisions to make that day. Don't forget, **I'm looking for each branch to provide a report on how they have or will have addressed our AAUW Maryland priorities for '23-'24. (See next page.)**

Tracy Lantz, AAUW Maryland President

Remember to Renew Your Membership in AAUW

Christine Schmitz, AAUW Maryland Membership Vice President

If you are not sure if you have renewed your dues, please look up your membership on the National website at <http://www.aauw.org>. If easier, please reach out to your Branch treasurer or to me, the AAUW Maryland Treasurer, Christine Schmitz. My email is dialacpa@aol.com.

AAUW Maryland Priorities for '23-'24

Equality-Education and Action on the ERA (See Judy Carbone's message on page 1.)

Youth Vote/ Voting in General

- Help any 16-yr olds that you know register to vote - yes, it's legal in MD! https://elections.maryland.gov/voter_registration/index.html?eligibility
- Collaborate with your local community college for a student voter registration drive.
- Environmental Voter Project : <https://www.environmentalvoter.org/>
- Vote Forward - write letters to votes in swing states or states with controversial ballot measures: <https://votefwd.org/>
- Partner with local orgs: LWV, NOW, Democratic/Republican Women's clubs

Women's Health Equity

- Provide fourth trimester support kits as shown by the Spring Meeting speaker, Dr. Nicole Kumi. Her *Butterfly Box* is a gift of self-care for a new mother: <https://www.theholmom.com/product-page/butterfly-box>
- Support midwife organizations in your jurisdiction.
- Follow up with federal reps regarding the [Women's Health Protection Act](#) - submitted in 2021 - not voted on yet.

Letters to the editor on any of these topics, especially if a local project worked out well!

Support Leadership Training by Honoring Dian Belanger

By: *Bea Dane; AAUW Maryland Vice President, AAUW Funds*

Congratulations to Dian Belanger, AAUW Maryland's 2024 Woman of Distinction! Dian will be honored in Spring 2024 at AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL). AAUW Maryland's goal is to honor Dian and inspire student leaders by donating \$20,000 as a platinum sponsor of the Women of Distinction (WoD) capstone event at NCCWSL. Our sponsorship helps AAUW National with expenses for the WoD event and reception. The WoD Fund is not the same as sponsoring women students to attend NCCWSL. Both sponsorships are important but have different goals.



Dian is an independent historian and author of three books. In more than 50 years with AAUW, Dian's service has included election to national Director and Vice President positions, participation in Lobby Corps, and assistance at the AAUW Archives. Remaining active as an honorary life member, Dian is Co-President of the Kensington-Rockville Branch. She's also a docent at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.

Your donation to the AAUW Maryland Woman of Distinction fund will help us honor Dian. She will be the 11th honoree since Maryland began this annual effort to enhance AAUW's leadership training program for college women. Hundreds of young women from across the country attend NCCWSL for three days of leadership training, inspiration, and networking—helping them gain the skills and confidence needed to pursue their goals. All the students gather for the Women of Distinction event to hear from and personally meet incredible role models.

We need your help to meet the \$20,000 target and to show broad support for this event. Individual donations of any amount are welcome, and we also encourage each branch to donate. We have succeeded in our fundraising for the past 10 years and I know we can do it again to honor Dian.

AAUW Maryland will receive at least 20 free tickets for the inspirational Women of Distinction event to be held at the University of Maryland, College Park. NCCWSL dates have been confirmed for May 30-June 1, 2024, but the WoD event date/time has not yet been finalized. We hope many of you will plan to attend the WoD event to feel for yourself the students' renewed energy!

To donate online:

- Go to **aauw.org**
- Click on the big red Donate button on the upper right corner
- Scroll down past the NCCWSL option until you see:
- **4355-Maryland Women of Distinction (NCCWSL) Fund**
- Click on **Count Me In**
- You will then be asked to login or create a new account
- This will bring you to the donation page

- Choose the amount you wish to donate
- Complete the other required information and **Checkout.**

To donate by check:

- Make your check out to AAUW
- On the check put the fund name and number: **4355-Maryland Women of Distinction (NCCWSL) Fund**
- **Mail to: AAUW**
- **1310 L Street, NW**
- **Suite 1000**
- **Washington, D.C. 20005**

All donations to this fund are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donations may be arranged through your retirement fund or donor advised fund.

If you have any questions, please contact Bea Dane at bea_dane@comcast.net



Important Public Policy Updates

By Roxann King, Public Policy Co-Vice President, AAUW Maryland

AAUW Maryland is getting ready for the legislative session. During December and early January, we determine which bills we will endorse during the 90-day 2024 Maryland General Assembly, which convenes on Wednesday, January 10 and adjourns on April 8. We will support the bills that comprise the Maryland

Legislative Agenda for Women and often several other bills as well. AAUW Maryland and several of our local branches are MLAW members. MLAW institutional and individual members rank the 18 proposed MLAW bills. The ranking by members determines the seven or eight bills that will comprise the MLAW agenda. Our AAUW Maryland ranking depends on tallying the rankings received from the request distributed to our members in late November.

Last year legislation added a referendum item to the 2024 election about adding the right to reproductive freedom to the Maryland Constitution. This year the MLAW is reviewing a varied collection of bills. Descriptions of the eighteen proposed bills from the November 4 MLAW Fall Convention at UMBC can be found at

<https://mdlegagendaforwomen.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/2023-mlaw-proposal-packet.pdf>. If you haven't ranked the bills yet, please send your ranking 1-18 to roxann.king1@gmail.com.

Mini-grants for branch programs.

The **mini-grant application** deadline was November 15. Applications are being reviewed by the grant committee. The awards will be announced before the December holidays. Applications for 2024-25 will be available in early January and due by June 15, 2024. on the AAUW Maryland website under Tools for Leaders. You will be able to view previous grant winners' applications there as well. Proposals should address AAUW public policy /diversity and inclusion goals.



Pictured with the MD NOW ERA display are several of the AAUW MD members who attended the MLAW Fall Convention: Cindy Graham, Diane Roca, Cheryl Menke, Kate Campbell Stevenson, Heather Reichardt, Susan Wierman, Roxann King, and Mary Ann Gorman.

Women’s Legislative Briefing.

Montgomery County Commission for Women will hold the **Women’s Legislative Briefing on Sunday, January 28, 11:30 – 5:30 p.m. at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville.** This meeting includes break-out sessions where you can interact with advocacy groups developing bills supporting women. It will again include a simultaneous session for Emerging Leaders, students in grades 6 - 12. We are a community sponsor for this event and are usually well represented. Information on the event, sponsorship and tickets is available at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw/wlb.html>. This is the first time since the pandemic that the event will be live. It draws hundreds of participants.

AAUW MD Advocacy Training Workshop, Tuesday, January 9, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom.

We will discuss how bills become law and how best to promote bills. To attend, contact roxann.king1@gmail.com.

Advocacy Day, Tuesday, February 13, 10 am – 1 pm (tentative).

Again, let Roxann know if you can join us in visiting legislative offices in support of our bills.

Voter Education.

2024 is an election year. Vote-related activities need to be planned now. Voter registration drives have already begun. Remember that we are a non-partisan organization: forums need representation from all parties. AAUW Maryland plans to implement a new AAUW election tool: voter guides showing candidates’ support for women’s issues.

National issues.

Bills that promote Equal Pay, Family Medical Leave, and making the ratified Equal Rights Amendment part of the Constitution are continuously being supported. There are two main ways for our members to participate nationally.

1. The first is to be enrolled in the Two Minute Activist, easily sending emails to your legislators when support for bills is needed.
2. The second is to join AAUW’s Lobby Corps, which is again active on select Thursday mornings, lobbying our legislators on Capitol Hill. Lobbyists are briefed, given materials and work in pairs. For information on Lobby Corps go to <https://www.aauwaction.org/> and use the tab for Lobby Corps.



SAVE THE DATE!
2024 AAUW MARYLAND SPRING CONVENTION
SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024
Rockville, MD

Know Your Maryland Public Policies – Be an Educated Voter!

With the 2024 election cycle right around the corner from the AAUW Maryland Spring Convention, we will focus on becoming educated about several public policy and voting issues. It is very important to understand what is happening state-wide on the **voting** front. We can then provide accurate information to our family and friends for the upcoming elections. Presentation topics will include:

- How **Ranked Choice Voting** can work to even the playing field in local elections,
- Learning about the status of Maryland’s proposed **constitutional amendment** to perpetually secure reproductive freedom, and
- An update on the results of relevant bills from the concluded **Maryland General Assembly**.



Additionally, we want to retroactively **celebrate International Women’s Day**, which will have occurred on March 8. **We would like each branch to select an outstanding woman, current or historic, from the United States or abroad, to present briefly during our lunch break.** Ideally, we will have a PowerPoint presentation where a member from each branch can talk for a few minutes about their chosen woman here!

In addition to these program elements, the convention will include the AAUW Maryland Annual Meeting and election of officers.

Nominations Open for Election of State Officers

Officer elections are held each spring at the annual state convention, with about half of the positions opening on alternate years. Officers whose terms expire in 2024 may be nominated to serve another term if they have not already served 2 terms, and/or new candidates may be nominated. It’s possible for people to share an office, and some find this helpful.

This year, the Nominating Committee is seeking individuals (or teams) for the following offices: President, Vice President for Programs, Vice President for AAUW Funds, and Vice President for Communications—as well as candidates for the 2025 Nominating Committee. Position descriptions are included in the AAUW MD Handbook, online under Tools for Leaders at <http://aauw-md.aauw.net>.

Don’t hesitate to volunteer or suggest a friend for upcoming vacancies on the AAUW Maryland Board of Directors! The Nominating Committee members are **Susan Wierman, Kate Campbell Stevenson, Bev Fallik, and Pat Stocker**. We look forward to hearing your ideas for 2024 nominees! **Please email suggestions to aauw-md@aauw.org.**



The Marylander
 AAUW Maryland
 607 Wilton Road
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Our Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Our Vision: Equity for all.

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

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